

27 August 1971

Agency Briefings Before Senate on Laos 1961-71 *

<u>Date</u>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Senators Present</u>	<u>Topics Covered</u>
2 May 1961	Foreign Relations	Capehart Carlson Williams Fulbright Mansfield Long Church	Hickenlooper Sparkman Morse Gore Symington Aiken
Dulles			25X1C Laos: U. S. continues to support all elements of the Laotian Army. Discussion on possible <div></div>
21 Aug 1961	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Hayden Stennis	Saltonstall Byrd Mansfield
Dulles			25X1C Laos: Cited as illustration of area where Agency had paramilitary program. Includes arming, <div></div>
2 Feb 1962	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Hayden Byrd Chavez	Robertson Saltonstall Young Stennis
McCone			Laos: Budget Briefing - Paramilitary activities as part of Agency program. Support to indigenous forces, including technical, air, arms, ammo, troop salaries. As an illustration, cited support rendered Laos, principally to Meo tribes. Helms outlined role of Meos and Vang Pao, and explained policy and decision-making process.

*NOTE: A total of 55 members have at one time or another been briefed on CIA involvements in Laos. 53 senators have attended one or more of the 27 briefings here listed, and two others--Senators Eagleton and Bentsen--have been briefed privately in response to their requests in connection with visits to the area.

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21 May 1962 McCone	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Saltonstall Young	Stennis Mansfield	Laos: Fitzgerald, back from visit, covered political and military situation, communist airlift of supplies.
27 Mar 1963 McCone	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Byrd Stennis	Saltonstall Hayden Young	Laos: Situation described as at standstill or "escalating into a stalemate." Internal political struggles. Pathet Lao action. Soviet and ChiCom keeping out letting N. Vietnamese give major support. Laos plays a stepping stone role. PDJ action with Kong Le. Order of battle figures. (Nothing on Agency support of para-military activity but Meos and Vang Pao discussed.)
19 May 1964 McCone	CIA Subcommittees Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Saltonstall Hayden	Stennis Young	Laos: Should be viewed as integral part of Southeast Asia situation - Pathet Lao forces driving neutralist off of PDJ. Laos on supply route to Cambodia. Sihanouk position vis-a-vis U.S. U.S. aid terminated. (No Agency operations mentioned).
11 Jan 1965 McCone	Armed Services and DOD Subcommittee of Appropriations	Russell Hayden Ellender Hill Young (O.) McClellan Robertson Stennis Pastore Jackson Cannon Thurmond Hruska	Byrd (W. Va.) Inouye McIntyre Brewster Saltonstall Young (N. Dak.) Mundt Smith Kuchel Allott Case Lausche	Laos: Confused political situation. Pathet Lao no major military action since PDJ takeover. Overall situation is stalemated. Cambodia: Sihanouk moving toward China on the assumption S. Vietnam will fall and it is better for him to move first. Cut off aid to him. Ellender asked if we give any aid at all. Was told none not even technical.

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9 June 1965	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Stennis Young	Saltonstall	Laos: Signs of instability in Government, but this is normal for Laos. Cambodia: U.S. relations with Cambodia are poor but they would oppose occupation by ChiComs.
6 Aug 1965	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Stennis Young	Saltonstall Hayden	25X1A Laos: [] (Chief FE) briefed on Agency program in Laos discussing in considerable detail the tribal effort. Phouma, the Premier, was generally informed but not in detail. He also 25X1A briefed on the [] supplemental in the current DOD supplemental.
5 April 1966	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Stennis Saltonstall	Young Smith	25X1A Laos: [] went through his prepared briefing on the supplemental appropriation of [] 25X1A He used graphics to show training results, para-military action of teams, deployment of CIA assets and discussed our program against N. Vietnam from other places in the world.
21 Sept 1966	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Symington Stennis	Saltonstall Young Smith	25X1A Laos: Laos program discussed rather fully. 25X1A Expenditures of [] more than the [] in the budget. Use of the Reserve for Laos and Vietnam would reduce the level to a dangerous low and that supplementary funds should be considered. Senator Russell specifically stated Reserve depletion to accomodate the RDC or Laos requirements should not be done without checking with the Committee first. Considerable discussion of the Laos situation. DCI pointed out that he had briefed Secretaries McNamara and Rusk this week and received their reaction that Laos is the only successful war the U.S. is fighting at this time.

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6 Oct 1966	Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee, Armed Services	Stennis Jackson	Cannon Thurmond	Laos: DCI touched on Laos indicating there had been no Communist gain and that the Communists had been suffering substantial casualties
Helms				Cambodia: No change in situation. Cambodia used for rehabilitation of N. Vietnamese troops and as sanctuary
				Thailand: Efforts taken by Thais to eliminate insurgency in north.
21 Feb 1967	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Hayden Mundt Young	Jackson Thurmond Smith Symington	Laos: Supplemental appropriation for Southeast Asia. In Laos the cost for road watch and tribal guerrilla welfare programs is going to exceed 25X1A [] this year which will require [] in supplemental. Committee is familiar with large paramilitary program there. Road watch teams added during 1964. Continued support for 40,000 tribal guerrillas. Two major areas of cost are materiel and air support. Programs in Laos are covert and we have no choice but to fund them.
Helms				
5 Oct 1967	Armed Services	Stennis Symington Jackson Cannon Pearson Tower	Miller McIntyre H. F. Byrd Dominick Brewster	Laos: Entire briefing devoted to Laos.
Helms				

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19 Jan 1968	Armed Services	Russell Symington Jackson	Cannon Smith Pearson
Helms			<p>Laos: Suffered a reversal at Nam Bac. Laotian army not good fighters. But Meos perform extremely well. [redacted] 25X1C</p> <p>American presence in Laos is small. If it weren't for Vang Pao situation would be much worse.</p> <p>Thailand: Insurgency in northeast corner continues. Tribes pass back and forth to N. Vietnam.</p>
23 Jan 1968	Foreign Relations	Fulbright Sparkman Mansfield Gore Lausche Symington Pell	Hickenlooper Aiken Williams Mundt Case Cooper
Helms			<p>Laos: [redacted] 25X1C</p> <p>[redacted] Communists stepped up military campaign, have taken Nam Bac valley. Situation in N. Laos is because Communists have left it on back burner. S. Laos is trail area and Communists try to keep it open.</p> <p>Cambodia: Confused situation but intelligence has evidence Viet Cong using Cambodia for base.</p>
16 Jul 1968	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Stennis Symington Jackson	Hill Smith Young Mundt
Helms			<p>Laos: Why do we hold only unimportant places after all we put in - (Symington) Irregular pay, equipment, training, all done by [redacted] 25X1A</p> <p>officers. Road watch results. We get better results for [redacted] in Laos than all we put in Vietnam (Symington). Laos film shown.</p>

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26 Sept 1969	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Ellender Young	Mundt Stennis Symington	Laos: Agency has nothing to do with regular Laotian forces. Agency giving funds to Laos for several years. Funds are very carefully audited.
Helms				25X1A [redacted]
				25X1A [redacted] Vang Pao directs Laotian forces.
				25X1A [redacted] is one of the finest officers in the Government (Symington). Road watch team operation explained. [redacted] 25X1A
				25X1A Laos, [redacted] Laotian government knows and consents of all Agency actions.
28 Oct 1969	Subcommittee on U.S. Security and Agreements Abroad, Foreign Relations	Symington Fulbright Mansfield	Aiken Cooper Case	Laos: Number of personnel in Laos and budget. [redacted] assist with irregulars. [redacted] 25X1C
Helms				25X1C [redacted] used for other roles. 1969 buildup in north central Laos and south Laos. 20 Thai pilots [redacted] 25X1C
25X1A				25X1C [redacted] Senator Fulbright complains about not being informed on funding. Four training camps for Meo tribesmen. No quid pro quo - [redacted] 25X1C
				25X1C pay scale explained. Number of guerrilla forces in north and south Laos.
30 Jan 1970	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Russell Ellender Young Stennis Symington	Jackson Dominick Fulbright Mansfield Aiken	Laos: Status of Agency operations unchanged since last briefing. Senator Symington complains about not being told about U.S. bombing in Laos. Senator Dominick recalls having been briefed on it as early as 1967 at the White House.

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13 Mar 1970	Foreign Relations	Fulbright Mansfield Gore Symington Pell McGee	Aiken Case Cooper Williams Javits	25X1A 25X1A 25X1A
Helms				Laos: [] in Laos. Tactical situation in northern and panhandle areas; panhandle operations. [] U.S. personnel in Laos - funds, duties, location. Senator Fulbright did not know CIA was using []
20 Mar 1970	CIA Subcommittees, Appropriations and Armed Services	Stennis Symington Dominick Ellender Young	Mansfield Aiken Goldwater Smith	
Helms				Laos: Vang Pao's army fatigued and threatened. Hanoi's intentions and objectives in Laos. Northern panhandle situation. Operational history of Agency actions in Laos.
7 Jul 1970	Foreign Relations	Fulbright Symington Pell	McGee Case Cooper	25X6
Helms				Laos: Status of war in south Laos, Ho Chi Minh trail actions. [] considering sending regulars or ethnic Cambodians to aid Cambodia. Khmer Krom (ethnic Cambodians) Six battalions in Cambodia.
19 Nov 1970	Subcommittee on DOD, Appropriations	Ellender Stennis Pastore Mansfield Young Smith	Allott Hruska Symington Jackson Thurmond	
Helms				Laos and Cambodia: Problem is Indochina, not Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia separately. Laos: DCI believes that "punch" will come around PDJ in northern Laos. Importance of protecting and expanding trail in south Laos. Northern Laos and Long Tieng are tempting targets to Communists.

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4 Mar 1971 Helms	Armed Services	Stennis Symington Cannon McIntyre Byrd	Smith Thurmond Dominick Schweiker Saxbe Laos: Activity in north - Long Tieng, Luang Prabang. Bolovens Plateau operations. Three separate Agency operations. ChiCom road building activity. Cambodia: Government functions without Lon Nol. Military situation. Communist attempt for political control and harassing actions.
23 Mar 1971 Helms	Foreign Relations	Fulbright Sparkman Mansfield Symington Pell McGee	Spong Aiken Case Javits Pearson Laos: Lam Son 719 evaluated. Communist actions shift from Vietnam to Laos and Cambodia. Activity on north - Long Tieng, Luang Prabang. Three separate Agency operations. ChiCom road building activity. General Vogt testimony. No more personnel there than before. [redacted] most knowledgeable person in Laos (Symington). Bombing in north. Agency supports 29,000 irregulars [redacted] 25X1A 25X1C 25X1C [redacted] No sheep-dipped military working for CIA. Cambodia: Government functions without Lon Nol. Military situation. Communist attempt for political control and harassing actions. No paramilitary, no training, no financing. Cooper/Church amendment applies to CIA in Cambodia (Senator Case).
11 Jun 1971 Helms	Subcommittee on Intelligence Operations, Appropriations	Ellender Stennis	Young Laos: President approves Agency operations. Discussion of Agency operations in Laos in relation to other programs. Cambodia: Souvanna Phouma got no CIA money.